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Title: The Burning of Trinsic

Author: Japheth of Trinsic  
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'Twas a sight to  
see, the sunlight  
falling lightly on the  
sandstone walls of  
Trinsic 'pon a  
morning in spring.

Children ran along  
the parapets and  
walkways, their  
laughter and running  
providing music to the  
daybreak, despite  
their oft-ragged  
clothing.

And I was one of  
those young ones,  
letting my joy rise  
up to the skies.

Little did we all  
know of the darker  
days that would lie  
ahead, for we were  
too young.

Had we but gained  
access to the quiet  
councils held in the  
Paladin tower as it  
faced the sea,  
councils lit by  
candlelight and  
worry, we would  
have learned more of  
the fears of  
imminent attack from  
the forest, where  
foul creatures born  
of dank caves and  
darkness were  
marauding ever more  
often into the lands  
around Trinsic's  
moat.

But we were  
children! The  
parapets and the moat  
were places to play,  
not stout defenses,  
and we gave no

thought to the  
necessities that must  
have required their  
construction.

We used to reach  
the sheltered  
orchards on the lee  
side of the parapet  
walls, where the  
southern river cut  
through the city, by  
swimming across the  
water.

The rich folk who  
lived in the great  
manses there would  
shout from their  
windows and shake  
their fists, for we  
would run through  
their gardens and  
tear up the delicate  
foxgloves and  
orfeurs with our  
unshod dirty feet.  
Then we would dive  
into the water and  
splash merrily to the  
fruit trees.

The southern  
river lazily slid  
under the an ungated  
arch in the mighty  
wall, and we would  
lay on the grassy  
bank and watch it  
gurgle by the lily  
pads.

That spring that  
pleasant spot became  
the doorway through  
which our city of  
Trinsic let in the  
monstrous deformed  
humanoids that  
savaged us. I lay upon  
that grassy bank and  
watched them wade  
in, their coarse hair  
wet and matted, algae  
and muck festooning  
their wild brows.

They caught sight  
of a quicksilver girl  
with bright blond hair  
and lively eyes. Her  
name was Leyla, and  
that spring I had held

fond dreams of  
holding her hand and  
sharing flavored ice  
while dangling our  
feet off the small  
bridge by Smugglers  
Gate.

And I said nothing  
when they caught  
her, and did not cry  
out when they  
dragged her off  
through that breach in  
our wall, and did not  
warn the city when I  
saw the helmeted orc  
captains call the  
charge upon the  
mansions.

Blame me not, for  
I was but a child, and  
one who hid in the  
branches of the peach  
trees, all a-tremble  
whilst I watched the  
smoke rise from Sean  
the tailor's, and fire  
lash out at the roof of  
witchy Eleanor's  
tavern.

To this day I have  
had no word of  
Leyla, and to this  
day the smell of  
burning wood can  
conjure terrible  
dreams. Yet with the  
eyes of adulthood, 'tis  
possible to examine  
the flaws in the  
defense of Trinsic on  
that fateful day, and  
the reasons why our  
walls are now  
double-thick, and  
why our buildings  
are now built as  
fortresses within a  
somber fortified city.

While I can look  
out from the top of  
the new Paladin  
tower, and spy the  
mighty white sails  
across the barrier  
island, and can  
descry the small  
hollow south of the

city where gypsies  
are wont to camp, I  
can also envision the  
city as it might be  
burning, and I bless  
the bargain we made:  
space for safety,  
grace for sturdiness,  
and wood for stone.

Whilst I live, I  
shall not see Trinsic  
burn, and no more  
cries of little girls  
will haunt the sleep  
of our fair citizens.

- Japheth, Paladin  
Guildmaster of the  
City of Trinsic